

# Leave the Fireworks to the Professionals



## ***Enjoy the many supervised professional displays!***

All across the state there are many professional fireworks displays supervised by local fire departments. Unfortunately, too many children and adult amateurs continue to set off fireworks that start fires, and cause serious injuries to themselves and others.

## ***Fireworks can be deadly!***

On May 20, 1997 a 26-year old man from Watertown was killed while he was lighting fireworks in a hallway. A 27-year old Framingham man was killed July 4, 1993, when his backyard fireworks exploded in his face. On July 4, 1992, fireworks fatally injured a 30-year old man on a Fairhaven beach. A 45-year old Gloucester woman died in a December 22, 2003 house fire when someone threw fireworks and ignited the Christmas tree in the living room. Three other people were injured.

## ***All fireworks are illegal in Massachusetts.***

The possession and use of all fireworks by private citizens is illegal in Massachusetts. This includes Class C fireworks which are sometimes falsely called “safe and sane” such as sparklers, party poppers, snappers, firecrackers, spinners and cherry bombs, to name a few. Sparklers burn at 1800°F.

It is illegal to purchase fireworks in another state, such as New Hampshire, and to transport them into Massachusetts. Illegal fireworks can be confiscated on the spot.



## ***Do not purchase fireworks through mail-order or on-line catalogues.***

The distribution of mail-order catalogues that clearly state that fireworks are illegal in some jurisdictions cannot be prohibited. State and local police regularly confiscate illegal shipments of fireworks. Many unhappy consumers have lost both their money and the fireworks trying to circumvent the law.

## ***Set a good example for your children. Children imitate what they see adults do.***

If you use fireworks children will imitate you, not realizing how very dangerous they are. Over two-thirds of the fireworks-related burn injuries reported by hospitals to the Office of the State Fire Marshal were children under age 18.



## ***FireFACTORS***

**Office of the State Fire Marshal  
Department of Fire Services**

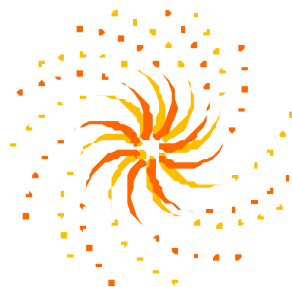
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### ***MFIRS facts!***

In the past decade (1994-2003) there have been 563 major fire and explosion incidents involving illegal fireworks reported to the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS). They caused 21 civilian injuries, nine fire service injuries, two (2) civilian fatalities and an estimated dollar loss of \$1,483,427. This is quite a substantial amount since most fireworks related fires are outside brush fires and do not usually have high loss figures. A majority of these fires occurred during the week of the Fourth of July holiday.

- On July 4, 2003, the Natick Fire Department responded to a car fire started by fireworks, originated on the front seat of the vehicle. It totally destroyed the \$ 20,300 car.
- On July 5, 2003, the Boston Fire Department was called to a fire caused by fireworks in a parking garage. The fireworks ignited the roof of the structure and caused an estimated dollar loss of \$20,000.
- On July 5 2003, the Fitchburg Fire Department was called to a fire in a two-family home. The fire was started by expended fireworks placed in a trash barrel against the outside the building. They smoldered for some time before igniting trash and the exterior of the building. The estimated dollar loss was \$11,000.



### ***M-BIRS facts!***

In the past decade (1994-2003), the Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System (M-BIRS) received reports of 64 people treated at Massachusetts emergency rooms for severe burn injuries from fireworks – burns covering 5% of more of the body. Over two-thirds, 69%, of the victims were children under the age of 18. During the last 10 years the oldest reported person injured by fireworks was 47 and the youngest was less than one year old.

- On December 20, 2003, a nine-year old boy from New Boston, NH was playing with a sparkler when he ignited some fireworks. He received burn injuries to 6% of his body surface area as a result of the fireworks exploding and was treated at Shriners Burn Hospital in Boston.
- On June 28, 2002, an 18-year old Holyoke female received severe burns to her right hand when fireworks exploded in her hand.
- On July 4, 2002, a 5-year old Hanson girl received burns to 5% of her body surface area while watching illegal fireworks being set off by her neighbors. Some of them came down on her and other spectators.
- On July 4, 2002, a 14-year old boy from Lynn received burns to 5% of his body while camping in Maine. The victim had firecrackers in his pocket which exploded when he stood too close to a campfire.
- On July 8, 2003, an 18-year old Brockton man received burns to 24% of his body surface area, on his arms, chest, abdomen and face, when fireworks ignited his shirt.

